

Eureka Opera House

Eureka National Register District

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NEVADA Eureka Opera House, Built 1880
A WORLD WITHIN A STATE SPACE
Eureka, NV
Courtesy Nevada Commission on Tourism
Photo by Andrea Rossman

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“Eureka!” a miner is said to have exclaimed in September 1864 when he discovered rich ore here – and thus the town was named. Eureka soon developed the first important lead-silver deposits in the nation, and during the furious boom of the 1880s, it had 16 smelters, over 100 saloons, a population of 10,000 and a railroad – the colorful Eureka and Palisade – that connected with the transcontinental line 90 miles to the north. Production began to fall off in 1883, and by 1891, the smelters closed, their sites marked by the huge slag piles at both ends of Main Street.

The Opera House has always served as a gathering place for the people of Eureka. The first silent movie was shown here in 1915 and then in the 1920s, the opera house was changed into the Eureka Theatre and talkie shows were presented. In 1923, the original oleo curtain on the stage was destroyed by fire. It was replaced with a curtain with advertisements from local businesses in 1924. The last movie was shown there in 1958 and the building had fallen into disrepair.

In 1990, Eureka County acquired the structure and began a three-year restoration. The building received the 1994 National Preservation Honor Award after being reopened on October 5, 1993. Today the Eureka Opera House is a full service convention center and Cultural Arts Center. The building is used for conventions, meetings, and community functions as well as cultural presentations.

For more information on the Eureka Opera House please visit:

<http://www.co.eureka.nv.us/opera/opera01.htm>

